BRIDGE GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION GUIDANCE (2026)

The Pediatric Epilepsy Research Foundation® (PERF®) and Child Neurology Society (CNS) are committed to developing the careers of child neurologists and advancing the state of the art through targeted research support. In pursuit of this goal, we have established a new research career development grant designed to provide *bridge funding to promising child neurology researchers who are applying for their first independent National Institutes of Health (NIH) or Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) research support*. Through this grant mechanism, we aim to assist investigators who have applied for NIH R01 or CIHR Operating/Project Grant support but were not funded. **This award is intended to retain investigators in child neurology clinical, translational, or basic research while they re-apply for NIH or CIHR funding.**

The Bridge Grant will be in the amount of $50,000 and will require a 1:1 match from the investigator's (Awardee's) Division or Department (thereby making $100,000 available to the Awardee).

It is appropriate for investigators to share this application submission guidance with ALL personnel assisting you with your grant application.

Please see "**Application Submission Instructions**" for exact instructions on page 4.

When the application is received, it will be reviewed for thoroughness and receipt will be acknowledged within 3 business days.

Questions? Email: PERF.CNSbridgegrant@gmail.com

Awardee Eligibility

The following individuals are eligible to apply for this award:

- Active members of the Child Neurology Society (or membership application in process).
- Have submitted their first NIH R01 or CIHR Operating/Project Grant proposal during the past two years, and that grant was triaged or evaluated in the peer-review process but fell below (or is likely to fall below) the NIH or CIHR pay line.
- Investigators with K-award (or equivalent) funding that will expire prior to the potential funding of their first R01 grant are eligible to apply, but current K-level funding is not a prerequisite.
- Investigators whose only federally funded grant is an R03 or R21 (or equivalent) award, and who are now **re-submitting** their first R01 or Operating/Project Grant, are eligible.

Awardee Ineligibility

The following individuals are ***not*** eligible to apply for this award:

- Investigators who plan to submit their first NIH R01 or CIHR Operating/Project Grant proposal are not eligible to apply at this time.
- Investigators with current, independent, federally funded grants (aside from one R03 or one R21 or equivalent) are not eligible to apply for funding through this mechanism.
- Individuals who are seeking funding to support ongoing projects that are currently funded by another extramural granting body are not eligible to apply.

PERF®-CNS BRIDGE GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

NIH/CIHR Funding Exception

Since these grants are intended as bridge support, if the NIH/CIHR grant is received by Awardee, the Awardee must notify PERF® within 10 business days of receipt of the notice of award, and the following would apply:

- If NIH/CIHR funds are received prior to distribution of Bridge grant funds, the award funds will not be released, and the grant will be closed out.
- If NIH/CIHR funds are received after distribution of Bridge grant funds, the Awardee is permitted to submit updated documents (i.e., a new budget, justification, and project timeline) and may be allowed to retain some or all the funds if they can provide sufficient rationale.

Application Requirements

1. Include a copy of the NIH Summary Statement, Impact Score and Percentile of the R01 or the equivalent feedback of a CIHR grant.

2. A letter of exemption from the Internal Revenue Service (with the tax identification number of the primary study site) needs to be included.

3. Peer review (mentor or colleague) of your proposal is strongly encouraged. If applicable, describe in Section 8 (“Mentoring Plan”) how a mentor or mentorship team will be involved in your Bridge grant project and/or in your transition to independent research funding.

4. Grant funding is contingent upon IRB/IACUC approval of your project (if applicable). Notice of current IRB/IACUC approval must be received by sponsor prior to receiving financial payment.

5. Two letters of recommendation are required. At least one reference letter must include a yellow highlighted statement that documents the willingness of the institution to accept the grant without indirect costs, provision of sufficient protected time to perform the research described in the application, and **assurance of a 1:1 match from the Investigator’s Division or Department**. Funding may be used to cover a portion of the investigator’s salary support, as well as for research costs, such as supplies, effort for a technician or research coordinator, statistical support, etc. The grant is not renewable to the Awardee’s institution and may not be extended (i.e. this grant mechanism does not allow no-cost extensions). The highlighted statements are to be included in a letter from the applicant’s Section Chief or Department Chair. This letter is mandatory.

6. All applicants will be notified of the grant review committee’s decision by June 30 of the submitting year.

7. Once an applicant is selected for a grant, they shall execute the PERF® “Grant Agreement” as a condition of grant acceptance. The grantee must submit a **Final Project Evaluation and Financial**** Report within 90 days of award completion. Failure to meet the deliverables or submit an interim report will likely result in termination of project funding. Should unexpected circumstances develop that affect the grantee’s ability to perform the work proposed in the funded application, the grantee must notify CNS and PERF® within 14 days of recognition of the unanticipated challenge.

   **The Financial Report should include how the PI used the Institutional Matching Funds or in-kind support.

8. The grantee’s institution should be prepared to cash the grant check within one month of receipt of the payment.

9. **CNS Annual Meeting Abstract Requirement.** During the grant period, or in the following year (i.e. April), the Awardee will be required to submit an abstract for presentation to the CNS Annual Meeting. Should the abstract be accepted, the Awardee will receive a fee waiver to cover the cost of the CNS meeting registration. We also anticipate that projects funded by this grant will lead to publication of original research in peer-reviewed journals.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Applications are due no later than 5:00 pm (central time zone) on April 13, 2026. There are no extensions.

Be advised that an application submitted on the deadline date will be administratively withdrawn if it does not fully comply with the submission instructions. Consider submitting the application at least 48 hours before the deadline for the PERF® administrator to review for formatting and completeness and provide the applicant an opportunity to fix any issues, if applicable.

- It is suggested you provide the application packet and forms to all staff assisting you with completion of this grant application.

- Merge all documents into one PDF, in the specific order listed in Table 1. A Table of Content is **REQUIRED** after the signed Face Page. An application form is provided for Section numbers in **red** font.

Table 1

Section	Document	Limit: Page, Line, or Word
1	Face Page	Two pages
2	Table of Content	Two pages
3	Copy of NIH Summary Statement, Impact Score and Percentile of the R01 or the equivalent feedback of a CIHR grant.	No page limit
4	List of Abbreviations	No page limit
5	Abstract	Not to exceed 300 words
6	Specific Aims	One page
7	Research Plan	Six-pages
8	Mentoring Plan	One-page
9	Biographical Sketches	Five pages per person
10	Other Support page	No page limit
11	Budget	One page
12	Budget justification	No page limit
13	Institutional Resources	One page per institutional site including submitting site.
14	Letters of Recommendation	Two-pages each
15	References Cited	No page limit

Table 1, continued

Section	Document	Limit: Page, Line, or Word
16	Performance Sites and Key Personnel, which should align with submitted biosketches.	One page limit
17	Awardee Financial Information (one page limit)	One page limit
18	501(c)3 (non-profit) proof of status.	No page limit
19	Human Subjects Research Plan	No page limit
20	Animal Research Plan	No page limit
21	IRB Approval Letter	No page limit
22	IACUC Approval Letter	No page limit

FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

- Single Spaced
- Standard paper size (8.5 x 11)
- ½" Margins
- 11-point Arial font
- Font color should be black.
- Use only a standard, single-column format for the text. A two-column format can create difficulties when reviewing the document electronically.
- If the research plan includes figures, graphs, diagrams, tables, figure legends and/or footnotes, a smaller type size is allowable, but it must be a black font color, readily legible, and follow the font typeface requirement. Color can be used in figures.

Continue to Next Page for the Application Submission Instructions

PERF®-CNS BRIDGE GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS (Forms are provided for Sections in **RED** font)

Section 1 / Application Face Page: (two-page limit)
Complete the application page and obtain institutional signature. We ask for the PI mobile number for notification purposes only.

Section 2 / Table of Contents
List completed Sections in the same order as shown in TABLE 1 with their starting page number in the right column.

Section 3 / NIH Summary Statement, Impact Score and Percentile or Equivalent CIHR Feedback

Section 4 / Abbreviations
List all word/terms used in this application with their abbreviation, if applicable.

Section 5 / Abstract: (not to exceed 300 words)
The abstract should provide a succinct description of the proposed work. It should include the project's broad objectives and specific aims. Do not include graphs or images.

Section 6 / Specific Aims (One page limit)
Provide a brief narrative that clearly indicates the concern or problem to be addressed in the proposal. State the goals or objectives and the hypothesis to be tested. List 2-4 specific aims, which should be logical, achievable and relate back to the research or hypothesis. The final paragraph/sentence should be an impact statement stating what will become possible that currently isn't, how the research will impact the scientific field. Be sure to emphasize how this work is likely to lead to a successful R01 or Operating/Project Grant resubmission.

Section 7 / Research Plan: (six-page limit)
Factors that will be taken into consideration when reviewing applications include:

- **Significance:** The planned research must have clear significance in addressing important questions related to child neurology.
- **Investigator:** The Awardee's history of productivity and experience in child neurology research are well-suited for the project.
- **Approach:** The planned research (overall strategy, methodology, and analyses) is scientifically sound and addresses the key issues raised by NIH/CIHR reviewers.
- **Strategy to address NIH/CIHR reviewer comments:** A clear and feasible plan on how the grant will facilitate the resubmission of a competitive R01/CIHR Operating /Project Grant application, what will be achieved with the funds, and how support for the present application will sustain the applicant's career in child neurology research.
- **Environment:** Institutional support and availability of staff, equipment and other physical resources for the planned research are sufficient. The application should demonstrate excellent scientific and career mentorship, as well as institutional commitment to the success of the applicant.

Suggestion: Use the NIH layout and information. See "Research Plan Section", starting on page 145.
https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-i/general-forms-i.pdf

Section 8 / Mentorship Plan (one-page limit)
Applicant is expected to have at least one mentor who is guiding their progress to independent research. The Plan is limited to one page and should include:

- Frequency of meeting with the mentor and communication method (i.e. in person, email, Zoom, Team, etc.)

- Academic Progress (mentorship improves promotions).
- Mechanisms for ensuring regular feedback.
- Networking Opportunities.
- Funds, resources, gift-in-kind, etc.,which are available from mentor to applicant.

Section 9 / Biographic sketch: (five-page limit per person)
PI (primary mentor) and key personnel. Key personnel are individuals who contribute in a significant, meaningful way to the scientific development or execution of the project. This typically does not include technicians or others unless they provide specific expertise or have a skillset needed to complete the proposed research. Use the standard NIH Bio sketch template https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm.

Section 10 / Other Support: (no page limit)
Applicants should provide funding information on active and pending support. Other support is to include all resources made available to the applicant. Other support is necessary to verify there is no budgetary or scientific overlap or commitment of effort greater than 12 person-months for the PI, or if applicable their mentor.

Section 11 / Budget: (use provided excel spreadsheet) NO INDIRECTS PROVIDED
Enter costs for the 12-month budget period not to exceed $50,000**. Expenses only related to this project should be requested. PERF® utilizes the NIH Salary Cap for the infrastructure/registry awards. For the current salary cap go to https://grants.nih.gov/policy-and-compliance/policy-topics/nih-fiscal-policies/salary-cap-summary
**At the conclusion of the 12-month budget period a Financial Report showing how the PI used the Institutional Matching Funds or in-kind support will be required to be included with the PERF®-CNS Bridge Grant Final Report.

Section 12 / Budget Justification: (no page limit)
Provide a justification for the budget requested under each category provided on the Excel spreadsheet. If no budget is requested for a category, indicate “not applicable”. Please also describe how the Institutional matching funds will be used.

Section 13 / Institutional Resources: (One page limit per institutional site including submitting site.)
List resources/facilities and available major equipment that are directly relevant to the proposed research and are required to undertake and complete the proposed research successfully.

Section 14 / Letters of Recommendation (Two pages each)
Two letters of recommendation are required. At least one reference letter must include a yellow highlighted statement that documents the willingness of the institution to accept the grant without indirect costs, provision of sufficient protected time to perform the research described in the application, and assurance of a 1:1 match from the Investigator’s Division or Department. Funding may be used to cover a portion of the investigator’s salary support, as well as for research costs, such as supplies, effort for a technician or research coordinator, statistical support, etc. The grant is not renewable to the Awardee’s institution and may not be extended (i.e. this grant mechanism does not allow no-cost extensions). The highlighted statements are to be included in a letter from the applicant’s Section Chief or Department Chair. **This letter is mandatory**.

Section 15 / References Cited Additional Information: (no page limit)
The references cited in the research plan, or any other parts of the application should be included in this section and must follow the style standards established by the National Library of Medicine (NLM): *List all authors, last name first, then first initial, and middle initial, if available, separate each author by a comma. List full article title, capitalize only first word and any proper nouns. Abbreviate journal title according to NLM*

Catalog of Journals[1]. Put year first, followed by month and date, if listed.

Section 16 / Performance Sites and Key Personnel: (one page limit)
Complete required information on Section 16 form.

Section 17 / Awardee Financial Information: (one page limit)
Complete required information on Section 17 form.

Section 18 / 501(c)3 (non-profit) proof of status
A letter of exemption from the Internal Revenue Service (with the tax identification number of the primary study site) needs to be included.

Section 19 / Human Research Subjects Plan: (no page limit)
Indicate the assurance status (active, pending, not submitted), the approval date and expiration date if known.

Succinctly state the characteristics of the subjects; research material source(s); plans for recruitment and obtaining consent procedures; any potential risks to subject; processes for protecting against or minimizing potential risks.

Inclusion of Women and Minorities: Discuss the demographics of the minority populations in the area and the criteria and rationale for selection of gender and racial/ethnic group, as well as your plan for recruiting/ including women and minorities in the research.

Targeted Enrollment Table: estimate participation in the study by gender and ethnicity.
Inclusion of Children: Discuss the participation of children and explain the rationale if children are excluded. If they are included, describe the rationale for selecting demographics: age, sex, etc.

Section 20 / Animal Research Plan: (no page limit)
Indicate the assurance status (active, pending, not submitted), the approval date and expiration date if known. Give a detailed description of the proposed use of the animals in the work outlined in the Research Strategy section. State the species, strains, ages, sex, and numbers of animals to be used in the proposed work. Provide information on the veterinary care of the animals involved. Describe the procedures for ensuring that discomfort, distress, pain, and injury will be limited to that which is unavoidable in the conduct of scientifically sound research. Describe the use of analgesic, anesthetic, and tranquilizing drugs and/or comfortable restraining devices, where appropriate, to minimize discomfort, distress, pain, and injury. Describe any method of euthanasia to be used and the reasons for its selection. Indicate whether this method is consistent with the recommendations of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Guidelines on Euthanasia. If not, include a scientific justification for not following the recommendations.

Section 21 / IRB Approval Letter: (no page limit)
May be provided at time of funding if institutional approval has not been received.

Section 22 / IACUC Approval Letter: (no page limit)
May be provided at time of funding if institutional approval has not been received.

[1] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nlmcatalog